

# School districts receiving Internet improvements

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Owensboro and Daviess County public school districts are getting major Internet upgrades as part of a statewide project through the office of educational technology.

"Everybody is getting a faster connection to Frankfort," said Don Fogle, network administrator for Owensboro Public Schools.

Owensboro just increased its bandwidth from 2.8 megabits to 100 megabits, Fogle said.

A final step, probably in April, will increase the district's connection speed to the Internet for its 1,200 computers.

Daviess County also received a system upgrade, from 8 megabits to 100 megabits for Internet access, officials said.

The improvements are part of the Kentucky Education Network (KEN) project, which will bring Internet 2.0 services to all Kentucky school districts.

Internet 2.0 is a high-speed data transfer system used mainly by educational institutions. High quality video-conferencing is one of its features.

The upgrades are like "expanding a highway from a two-lane, dirt road to a 20-lane autobahn," Steve Burton, Daviess County's computer operations manager, said in a news release.

Daviess County has more than 6,000 computers.

One example of how more bandwidth can improve classroom education is that it will allow science teachers and students to watch a live broadcast from NASA (that is not carried on a TV station) and ask questions from their classrooms, said Susan Smith, the district's technology coordinator.

The Owensboro district has been maxing out its 2.8 megabits between 10 a.m. and 3 p.m., Fogle said.

Owensboro schools also have started receiving computers under the state's Instructional Device Upgrade program, school officials said.